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THE
Teacher's Guide
AND
PARENT'S ASSISTANT.

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WORCESTER'S PRIMER.

A Primer of the English Language, for the use of families and schools. By Samuel Worcester. Boston: 1826. 18 *mo. pp.* 80.

Having remarked at some length on the Pestalozzian Primer, we now proceed to notice two smaller works, which are not, however, of inferior merit. The perusal of these little books has given us much pleasure; and we hope that our review of them will not be tedious or uninteresting to our readers. We do rejoice to find that the business of writing books for children has at length begun to be undertaken by competent men,—men of talents,—men acquainted with the philosophy of the infant mind.

The method of teaching recommended by Mr. Worcester is quite different from any that we have before noticed; and though it may not be, in every respect, the best that can be devised, we have no hesitation in pronouncing it to be, in some respects, and perhaps as a whole, the best that has yet been published.

The book is in fact what it professes to be,—a *Primer;* that is, a *first* book for children. The lessons are such as a child can read and understand. The paper is of a superior quality, and the type is large; so that the letters and words appear distinct and fair to the eye. The whole book exhibits a neatness

and beauty, that can hardly fail to have a favorable influence on the mind of the child; for that child who could willingly soil or tear such a book, must indeed be devoid of all ideas of neatness and of every particle of good taste.

Of Mr. W.'s method of teaching the alphabet by letters put on blocks, we have already given an account. (p. 39.) He seems to prefer, that a child should learn the names of the letters before beginning to read; though he remarks, that this is not essential; and he has given directions for those who may choose to adopt a different course. The child, he says, "may learn first to read words by seeing them, hearing them pronounced, and having their meaning illustrated; and afterwards may learn to analyse them, or name the letters of which they are composed."

The *first* lesson consists of the words, *man*, *cat*, *hat*, *dog*, *hog*, *boy*, *cup*, *rat*, *pin*, with the article *a* prefixed to each, and with a picture of each object, standing against its appropriate word. Each word is printed both in capitals and in small letters, the latter being placed directly under the former. This occupies two pages. The next page contains the same words, arranged in columns, in a different order, and without the Cuts. The following are the "Directions to Teachers" prefixed to the first lesson.

"In teaching this and the next lesson, the instructer must name the words, and let the scholar repeat them after him. Then the letters of which each word is composed, must be learned, and the scholar must be shown what those letters make when sounded together, and the meaning of the word must be illustrated by the Cut, and by remarks and anecdotes tending to amuse and interest the child. When the scholar knows a word, and the letters of which it is composed, he may be required to spell it. In order to give him a distinct idea of the difference between *reading* a word and *spelling* it, require a scholar that understands you to read a word in the book. Say that is the way to *read* it. Then let the same scholar close the book and name the letters of

the word, and pronounce it. Call that *spelling*, or the way to *spell* it. Repeat this method a few times, and then require the little child to do the same.—Let the child also spell all the words in these two lessons with the Letter Blocks. This will prove a very valuable exercise ; and it may be applied to all the spelling lessons, until the scholar can arrange the blocks readily for any word that he is required to spell. This will resemble the exercise of writing and printing ; and the scholar that has learned to spell in this way, will acquire a habit of spelling correctly at all times.—Do not require more than one phrase for the first exercise. If the child can learn to read and spell *a man* in one day, or even in two, say that he does very well. After one phrase is learned, the next will require less labor. Be careful to keep the mind of the child occupied but a few minutes at a time ; and be sure to make his lesson interesting by your remarks. If he is learning *a cat*, ask some questions about puss, and tell what she does.—It will frequently be necessary for the teacher to read the words and to spell them several times, before the child will succeed without assistance.—The columns of words immediately following the reading lessons throughout the Primer, are selected from the reading lessons. They are designed for spelling lessons, and also for exercising the pupil, in the first part of the book, in identifying the principal words of his reading lesson, where they are separated from the Cuts which tell what they are."

The *second* lesson consists of the words, *cow*, *hen*, *pen*, *sun*, *fox*, *gun*, *mug*, *top*, *leg*, with the article *the* prefixed to each, and with Cuts as before. The size of the letters, which, in the first lesson, was very large, is now a little reduced.

In the *third* lesson, there are two lines relating to each Cut, the words being no longer printed twice over, once in capitals and once in small letters. Thus, against the picture of a *fan*, are these two sentences : " A nice Fan. This is a nice fan." In like manner, the following sentences are placed, two against each Cut : " A good Book. You may read the book.—A small

Tree. It is a fig-tree.—A fine Kite. It is my kite.—A large Tub. See this large tub.—A great Drum. The drum makes a loud noise." As soon as the child has learned all the words in the first of the two lines relating to a Cut, he is set to select from the other line such words as were in the first; and the other words are then told to him. In this lesson, the size of the type is again a little reduced.—The *fourth* and *fifth* lessons are similar to the third, "except that the same words are not often to be found in the two lines relating to any Cut." There is one example, in regard to the *moral* tendency of which we have a little apprehension. "This is a good Girl. She looks quite nice." The impression naturally made by these two sentences, thus connected, is either that 'to be good' and 'to look nice,' are synonymous expressions, or at least that 'being good' and 'looking nice' are inseparable concomitants, the one of the other. "She looks quite nice; and *therefore* she is a *good* girl."

The *sixth*, *seventh*, *eighth*, and *ninth* lessons consist of sentences relating to the same objects that have already been mentioned, the Cuts being now omitted. In getting these lessons, the scholar is to turn back, and find where the names of objects, which now occur, occurred before and were illustrated by Cuts. In this way, these four lessons will serve as a review of all the preceding lessons; and the child should be allowed "as much time as he requires to make a thorough review."

In the *tenth* lesson, which commences on p. 47, the size of the type is again reduced, and becomes such as it is to be throughout the remainder of the book. Even this smallest type, however, is of a good size, being larger than that which is used in the Teacher's Guide, and of course much larger than is commonly used in school books for children. To the tenth and each of the remaining lessons, (eleven in number) one Cut, exhibiting a group of natural and artificial objects, is prefixed; and the lessons consist almost entirely of sentences descriptive of two or three of the principal objects exhibited in each Cut. The fol-

lowing are the " Directions to Teachers" prefixed to the tenth lesson : " The instructer will have observed, that it is the design of this Primer, to teach only what a little child can understand. It will, however, be necessary that the instructer should labor diligently to render every sentence intelligible and interesting. It must not be expected, that a book will teach an infant, without constant efforts on the part of the instructer, to explain the meaning of everything which the book contains.—The following lessons are easy ; but they are as difficult as a little child can understand, even when faithfully assisted.—Let the lessons be read well before the spelling lessons are studied. Do not pass from one lesson to another, until the first is read and spelled correctly. In addition to the descriptions here given of the objects represented by the Cuts, the teacher may remark on the several parts of the objects, and give any useful and interesting information respecting them, that may occur to his mind."

The following " Directions to Teachers" are prefixed to the *sixteenth* lesson, which commences on p. 65 : " In the preceding lessons, very few words have been used except monosyllables. Others will now be gradually introduced.—It is not important that the child should be taught to divide any of the words in this book into syllables. They are such as every person of tolerable education pronounces correctly, and therefore no marks of accent, or of the sounds of the letters, are necessary.—Children should learn to read these words as they learn to speak them ; not by arbitrary rules, or divisions into syllables, but by the pronunciation of others. When children are far enough advanced to be able to analyse the language which they use, they may be required to divide words into syllables and letters, and to give the precise sound of each part."

From the view we have given of Mr. Worcester's Primer, it appears that it is altogether different from a Spelling Book, and quite different from any other first book for children that has been published. One of its distinguishing excellencies is, that the child

is set to spell only those words which he finds in his reading lessons, and that these words are not to be spelled till after the lesson containing them has been read and explained. By reading the lesson, though it be done only for the purpose of reading, and without any reference to spelling, the child becomes familiar with the appearance of the words, and with the letters of which they are composed; and is thus prepared, in a great measure, for the exercise of spelling. And by seeing the words as they are connected in sentences, he learns to attach a meaning to each; so that, when he comes to spell, each word will appear pleasant to him, from the acquaintance which he has formed with it, and from its suggesting some interesting trains of thought. Whereas, if he learned to spell the words in the first place, they would appear to him void of interest and almost void of meaning. It is much more difficult to spell a lesson, than it is to read it; and for this reason as well as others, children love to read a lesson better than they do to spell all the words which compose it. Hence, although spelling a lesson first would render the subsequent reading of it more easy, still the child ought to read it first, because he needs to have the exercise in spelling facilitated by previous reading, *more* than he does to have the exercise in reading facilitated by previous spelling. He can also find out new and difficult words more easily, and remember them better, in the reading lesson, than in the columns used for spelling. In the reading lesson, the connection and the sense assist in deciphering a new or difficult word; and the association of ideas which he thus forms, assists in remembering it: while, in the columns, if they *precede* the reading lesson, there is no connection nor sense to be had, nor any ground for an association of ideas, but mere proximity of place.—We have said the more on this subject, because Mr. Worcester is the only man, who, to our knowledge, has adopted that arrangement in regard to spelling, which we have long considered as the only proper one. And to render the exercise of spelling still more interesting and profitable to the

learner, and avoid the possibility of his failing, in any instance, to attend to the meaning of the words, or to recollect the connection in which they were used in the reading lesson, he is set, as he spells each word, to find and point out the same word in the reading lesson.

Another distinguishing excellence in Mr. W.'s method, is the use of *Letter Blocks* in spelling. Spelling is learned by the *eye* better than by the ear; the names of the letters being ill adapted to suggest the pronunciation of a word. Besides, the memory is assisted by the combined aid of two senses, more than by either alone. Hence, where letter blocks are not used, if a child, especially a young child, fails in spelling a word, it is not so well to spell it to him, in order to set him right, as it is to show him the word in the book, and make him discover and correct his error by seeing the letters with his own eyes. Hence too the utility of writing, as a means of learning to spell.—It may be useful to give a direction or two in regard to the manner of teaching the child to spell with the letter blocks. If he is a beginner, place before him, promiscuously, a few inches apart, those letters only, which are needed to form the particular word to be spelled, and let him place them in the proper order. If he is more advanced, and has learned to repeat the names of the letters in alphabetic order, place them all before him in that order, and let him select and combine as may be required.—The blocks may be inch cubes, as recommended by Mr. W.; or they may be of any form that shall be found most convenient. An inch in length, three fourths of an inch in width, and half an inch in thickness, would probably be found as convenient dimensions as any, at least for such letters as are kept for sale by the publishers of the Primer. [Hilliard, Gray, & Co.] It is not necessary that the Italic letters or the numbers should be put on blocks; nor very necessary that the Roman capitals should; as these may all be learned in the form of tickets. And even the Roman small letters, which are used in spelling, may be stuck upon pasteboard,—only, in this

case, the children will be apt, in arranging them, to soil them with their fingers.

Another excellence of Mr. W.'s Primer, by which it is distinguished from Spelling Books, is the absence of all marks to indicate the accent, the division of a word into syllables, and the various sounds of the letters. These marks, except perhaps a hyphen to show, in some instances, the division of a word into syllables, are of no service to the learner; and to the teacher they are needless, because, if any case of doubt arises, the dictionary is always at hand.

After the almost unqualified commendation which we have very cordially bestowed, we beg leave to mention one *defect*, which the Primer appears to us to have, but which might, we think, be remedied, without relinquishing any of the excellencies, by which the work is so eminently distinguished. The defect to which we allude is this: the child has no opportunity, or a very poor one, to learn the *powers* of the letters; that is, to get a distinct impression as to the *sound* which each letter *ordinarily* represents. The *names* of the letters do a little towards this, and but a little. The tables of *abs*, which succeed the alphabet in Spelling Books and common Primers, though not just what we could wish, yet answer the purpose tolerably well. But Mr. Worcester sets the child, at the very outset, to reading words of three letters; and these, too, promiscuously arranged. Let us look at it a little more closely. In the first lesson, the child of course reads and spells the word *man*, without knowing the power of any one of the letters. He cannot be expected to know this from a single instance. He may notice the form, and he may know the name of each letter; but why the combination of these three characters should represent the sound *man*, is to him perfectly mysterious. So far, the child's ignorance is not to be imputed to Mr. W., as it must be the same in any method of teaching whatever. Let us proceed, then, to the next word, which is *cat*. Here, the child finds the letter *a* again; but as it is placed between two let-

ters different from either of those in the other word, he cannot be supposed capable of getting an idea of its power. He thus reads and spells two words, and sees five letters, without learning the power of any one of those letters. In the next word, however, a ray of light is afforded, if the child, which can hardly be hoped, has discernment enough to see it. By comparing the words *cat* and *hat*, he may perceive that the difference of sound depends entirely on the difference between the initial consonants; and hence he may obtain an idea of the powers or sounds of those two consonants, that is of *c* and *h*. But this, even if he is so fortunate as to learn it, he will probably forget in learning the next word, *dog*, which is composed of letters all entirely new. By comparing this word, however, with the following word, *hog*, he may perhaps learn the power of *d*, and revive the forgotten *h*. But the next words, *boy* and *cup*, will probably make him forget the *h* again, as well as the newly learned *d*. The following word, *rat*, might have served to teach the child the power of *r*, if it had been placed next to *cat* and *hat*. The word *pin* completes the lesson, having no analogy to any of the preceding words, except, in a slight degree, to the first word, *man*. And now, we strongly suspect, that the child may learn to read and spell all these words,—may learn them perfectly, and become familiar with them, without discovering the power of a single letter of the alphabet. Similar remarks may be made on the next lesson; in which there is no approach to induction, except in the words *hen* and *pen*, *sun* and *gun*. It does not appear to have been any part of Mr. W.'s design, to select and arrange words in such a way, as to lead the child to notice the power of each letter in modifying the sound of the words of which it forms a part. And unless, by the arrangement of the words, or by the ingenuity and efforts of the living teacher, the child is assisted to do this, it must take a long, long time for him to learn the powers of the letters by his own observation; and until he has learned these powers, his progress in learning to read and spell must be much more

slow and difficult. Our orthography is indeed so miserably irregular, and defective, and redundant, that few of the letters possess one invariable sound; still, the sound of each consonant, and the two sounds of each vowel, which are found in common tables of *abs*, occur so much more frequently than the deviations from them, that it is important the learner should become early acquainted with these, as a foundation for improvement in the art of reading and spelling.

[Remarks on the FRANKLIN PRIMER, in our next.]

MECHANICS' INSTITUTIONS.

The following paragraphs are extracted from an Address, delivered at the opening of the Boston Mechanics' Institution. They do not, indeed, relate to the business of common schools, or of domestic education; but they contain sentiments, which cannot fail to be reciprocated by every enlightened parent and teacher. In the words of the editor of the American Journal, to whom we are indebted for the extracts, "A fresh interest and variety will be communicated to the general subject of education, by the intelligence drawn from this wide field of popular and general improvement."

"The object of our institution is, to give to persons, whose time is chiefly occupied with business, or labor, knowledge of a kind to be directly useful to them in their daily pursuits. Of this kind is the Theory of Mechanics, showing the principles on which mechanical power of all kinds is gained, and all machines are constructed; Natural Philosophy, which explains the general nature of the great powers and bodies that exist in the universe, of air and water, for example, and the manner in which the works of man affect, or are to be affected, by them; and Chemistry, which makes known the particular nature and properties of all the substances, about which the art or science of man is occupied.

"No one, we think, can for a moment doubt, that if a laboring mechanic could be fully furnished with knowledge of these kinds, and at the same time his disposition and ability to labor be entirely undiminished, he would be greatly benefited by the acquisition. But there are those who think that the possession of knowledge and the exercise of the understanding are incompatible with a constant and diligent use of the physical powers;

that vigor of mind and mechanical skill are inconsistent with each other.

Let us ask how and why this can be true. Will an artist perform less skilfully an operation, of which he understands the reason and the principle, than one which is dark and unintelligible? Is there any magic, by which knowledge palsies the hand of skill, unnerves the arm of strength? Let a mechanic understand the nature of the material he employs, enable him to predict the effect which heat and air and moisture will have upon it, show him how to counteract that effect; will he, in consequence of this knowledge, produce a less durable work? Give him such an insight into the secrets of nature, as to enable him often to omit and always to shorten a process, which before was long and expensive; show him how to give a new temper and a keener edge to his tools; will he, from this saving of time and labor, become remiss, and conceive a disgust to his art? Carry him on until you have informed his judgment and refined his taste; will his customers complain, when he adds to the other qualities of his goods a graceful figure and fashion?

Let us interrogate history upon this point. Let us take instances, and learn from them the effect of knowledge on the character of an individual as an artist; I mean an artist in the best and widest sense of the term.—Rennie was born in obscure life, was the son of poor parents, and brought up as an apprentice to a mill-wright. He several years pursued that occupation in Scotland, with great success. Availing himself of an opportunity to attend a school of Mathematics and Natural Philosophy, he so perfected his natural genius, that, leaving his former business and his native country, he became the most distinguished civil engineer in England, and left, as a monument of his genius, a structure—we refer to the Waterloo bridge over the Thames—which has been pronounced the most perfect of its kind in Europe. James Watt was a mathematical-instrument maker at Glasgow. By the dexterous application of a few principles in chemistry, which he had learned of Dr. Black, he carried to perfection the steam-engine, a machine, which has added more to the mechanical power of man, and produced a wider direct change upon the arts, than any other invention of modern times. I need not name to you another distinguished mechanic, your townsman, one who was born near the spot where we are now assembled, and in this town bound apprentice to a printer. For many years, he wrought diligently in that calling; so diligently and with such skill, that

there were few who could hold competition with him. He was wont to steal hours from sleep to give to study; but the fruits of that study enabled him, many years afterwards, to sustain the reputation of the genius and liberty of his country in more than one court in Europe. These men all attained wealth and distinction for themselves, and bequeathed a noble example, and undying fame, to us and to posterity. What raised Watt and Rennie and Franklin from the humble condition in which they were born? What, but the cultivation of their powers by the very kind of knowledge which it is the object of our institution to offer to all?

These, however, it may be objected, are remarkable instances—exceptions from general principles—men who would have raised themselves to distinction from any situation. But what is the effect of knowledge on great masses of men, when it is to be estimated by millions? Do we find that the manufactures of those countries, in which the education of the people has made some progress, fall short, in quantity or excellence, of those produced by the same number of hands exerted with less intelligence? Hear the answer of a man, whose national prejudices must have been all on the other side, but who preferred truth to the gratification of the pride of his countrymen. "We are compelled to confess," says Dupin, "that fourteen millions of English and Scotch have more industry, and produce a greater number of articles to convey to distant countries, than thirty or forty millions among the people of the continent." And what is the reason? Are the people of the continent less quick to learn; have they less capacity than the islanders? Dupin ascribes the difference —and it is not easy to get better authority on this point—to the skill which comes from knowledge—to the union of philosophy with art.

Granting then the practical usefulness of knowledge to the mechanic, there are some who will be ready to say, that however desirous they may be of obtaining it, they have no time—the day of improvement with them has gone by—they have grown too old to begin their education, and they have not, and cannot obtain, the previous knowledge which they suppose some of the instruction offered to them requires.

In the first place, with regard to time, there certainly is no one who cannot find one hour in a week to attend a lecture on an interesting subject, which he may have in his thoughts all the rest of the week. If he do only this, he will find himself a

great gainer at the end of the year. But this is not enough: to derive the greatest advantage from his lecture, he must also read. And for this purpose, no one, who has a thirst for information, will find it difficult to find half an hour or an hour every day. In that short time, a great deal may be done. Half an hour a day for a year, amounts to six hours a day for more than a month. This is not a very short time to give to study; and this portion of time, frugally used, would enable a mechanic, with the aid of the lectures, to gain what he would always after consider an invaluable knowledge of Natural Philosophy, Chemistry, or almost any other branch of science.

Again: it is a common opinion, that the knowledge of Natural Philosophy cannot be acquired, in any considerable or useful degree, without some previous acquaintance with Mathematics. It is true that it is not easy, nor often perhaps possible, to go deeply into the theory of Natural Philosophy, without a very thorough knowledge of Mathematics. It is not our object to make deep philosophers, but intelligent and skilful mechanics; and there is a great deal, and that of the most practical kind of information, which can be acquired by a person, however advanced in life, without any preparatory knowledge of another science whatever. No mechanic, who has an opportunity and leisure to attend to Geometry, should fail to do it, for he will find it of constant use to him. But let no one be discouraged by his ignorance of this branch, and thereby be prevented from endeavoring to gain knowledge of another kind of more immediate utility.

There are then few or none, who have not enough of knowledge, of time, and of capacity, to be greatly benefited by the philosophical lectures and other means of improvement which it is the immediate object of this institution to provide: and the benefit will not be confined to their character as mechanics. They will be benefited as moral agents—as members of society.

*** Let the light of science fall upon that man; open to him the fountain of knowledge. A few principles of philosophy enter his mind, and awaken the dormant power of thought. He begins to look upon his art with an altered eye. It ceases to be a dark mechanical process, which he cannot understand; he regards it as an object of inquiry, and begins to penetrate the reasons and acquire a new mastery over his own instruments. He finds other and better modes of doing what he had done before blindly and without interest a thousand times. He learns to prof-

it by the experience of others, and ventures upon untried paths. Difficulties, which before would have stopped him at the outset, receive a ready solution from some luminous principle of science. He gains new knowledge and new skill, and can improve the quality of his manufacture, while he shortens the process and diminishes his own labor. Then labor becomes sweet to him; it is accompanied by a consciousness of increasing power; it is leading him forward to a higher place among his fellow men. Relaxation, too, is sweet to him, as it enables him to add to his intellectual stores, and to mature, by undisturbed meditation, the plans and conceptions of the hour of labor. His home has acquired a new charm; for he is become a man of thought, and feels and enjoys the peace and seclusion of that sacred retreat; and he carries thither the honest complacency which is the companion of well earned success. There, too, bright visions of the future open upon him, and excite a kindly feeling towards those who are to share in his prosperity. Thus his mind and heart expand together. He has become an intelligent being; and while he has learned to esteem himself, he has also learned to live no longer for himself alone. Society opens like a new world to him; he looks upon his fellow creatures with interest and sympathy, and feels that he has a place in their affections and respect.***

The advantages to the community from the general scientific education of mechanics, are no less certain and important, than those which will ensue to the individual. Many of them are perfectly obvious. It has, for example, been ascertained by well conducted and satisfactory experiments, what proportion it is necessary to give to walls, to enable them to resist any lateral or downward pressure to which they may be exposed; what proportion the flue, fire-place, and apartment to be warmed, should have to each other, to ensure, under ordinary circumstances, the conveyance of the smoke; at what period trees should be felled, and in what way and for how long a time the wood should be seasoned, that it may suffer from decay or shrinking in the least possible degree. Make this kind of knowledge familiar to working masons, carpenters, and joiners, and you deliver us from some of the most annoying and intolerable of the lesser evils of life. As it now is, great masses of information of this practical kind, are lying buried in books, or in the memories of studious men who have no means of bringing it to its right destination. By an absurdity of misapplication, it has been hitherto communicated to those only, who, of all men in society, have least need

and make least use of it. We would open these books to the mechanic; we would ask these learned men to pour out the treasures of their knowledge into the bosom of those who will cause its fruits to appear in every form of convenience, comfort, and elegance, with which polished art can adorn the institutions of society. Every individual will thus be directly benefited by the perfection to which the various products of the mechanic arts will be carried; while the increased activity and energy of one class will of necessity react upon every other class of the community.

Science, too, will not be without its ample share in these benefits. The light that she sheds, like the twice blest influence of mercy, will be thrown back with redoubled lustre on herself. Where there has heretofore been one observer, we raise up thousands. For one unskilful experimenter, pursuing, in the intervals of some graver task, his solitary, unaided, oft interrupted researches, we crowd the workshops of a whole country with her votaries, all anxious to repay the debt of gratitude, eagerly bent on tracing nature in her changeful shapes, and with uninterrupted years, and myriads of ever varying experiments, filling up the storehouse of observation.

The principles of science have hitherto been accessible to those only who were pursuing a course of study preparatory to what are called the liberal professions. The poor and the occupied, if destined to the active pursuits of life, have been almost necessarily debarred from them. By Mechanics' Institutions they are offered to all, to the busy, the poor, and the uninformed; to those who have been taught their value by their want, and who are therefore ready to estimate and employ them.

We confess we are not unmoved spectators of this scene. We cannot look on, without a deep and joyful feeling, at the prospect which is opening before us. Thousands, at this hour, are listening to the lessons of philosophy, which come home to their 'business and bosoms.' The gates of the temple of science, closed as with adamant, since the beginning of time, against all but a favored few, are thrown wide open, and multitudes, from the workshops and fields, from the mine, the forest, and the ocean, from every region of labor and action, are hastening up thither to partake and rejoice in the waters of intellectual life."

State of the Schools in Windham County, Ct.

From the facts and statements communicated to the meeting, held in Brooklyn, it appears, that the public money has been unequally divided and often misapplied; the teachers in many instances are utterly incompetent, the books used are seldom the best, and often very unsuitable, and in those which are used, the want of uniformity is so great, that there are few schools in which it is possible the scholars can be properly classed. In many schools the children are not well supplied with books of any kind. The school-houses are often badly constructed and out of repair; schools stop for want of wood; the children are not constant in their attendance; and those who do attend, come dropping in at all hours of the day, thus disturbing each other and rendering attempts at system and classification impracticable. Parents often interfere improperly in the government of the schools, and in dictating the studies and modes of instruction. Children are consequently found in every school engaged in the highest branches usually taught, before they are well acquainted with the first rudiments. Teachers are engaged, and approved by the districts, before they are examined by the visiters, and the visiters seldom have sufficient independence to reject a man, however incompetent they may think him, who, by the influence of friends or the bribery of cheapness, has obtained a vote of the district in his favor. The visiters very rarely attempt the least interference with the course of study, or mode of instruction and government; and whenever they do, they almost uniformly find parents, children, and teachers in opposition to them. A feeling of apathy and indifference has long pervaded the community, with the exception of an anxious care to avoid every thing like taxes or contributions. Our schools are too cheap to be valued, and the pay of teachers often too low to command even ordinary talents. These are melancholy, painful statements, and ought to excite feelings of shame for our neglect, and of determination to permit evils, so common and disgraceful, no longer to continue. It is hoped an excitement has been produced in relation to this very important and interesting subject, which must cause an effectual and permanent reformation. Much is doing in other parts of the State. Very gratifying communications were received from school societies and gentlemen in Colchester, East Windsor, Hartford, and Farmington.—*Windham Gazette.*

☞ The School Fund, in Connecticut, amounts to more than $1,700,000, and yields an annual dividend of more than $72,000.

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